

MAW.
Pa 1793-13

THE
HAPPINESS of the GOOD
IN A
FUTURE STATE.

A SERMON,
PREACHED
ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH
OF
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A.M.

BY LAWRENCE KANE. *

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL BE HAD IN EVERLASTING
REMEMBRANCE. Psalm cxii. 6.

*To those who knew him not, no Words can paint!
And those who knew him, know all Words are faint!*

H.M.

B A T H:

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* Expelled for horse dealing

THE GOOD

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THE GOOD



TO THE PUBLIC.

THIS Sermon was preached at the Methodist Chapel in *Stourport* on the 20th of March, and at the Town-Hall of *Evesham*, by request of the Mayor and others, on Sunday, April 10th, 1791. I was afterwards requested to print it. Accordingly I wrote it out as near as I could, word for word as I preached it, fearing that a more extensive view either of the subject contained in the text, or of the person whose character and life I meant to illustrate by it, would defeat the end which both they and I thought would be answered by the subject. While I was doing this, I heard of several sermons published on the same occasion, which I hoped would satisfy my friends, and render my work needless. But on reading these sermons, though they did great credit to the memory of the deceased, yet finding the plan so very different from mine, and containing so very few of the particulars which I have offered, they requested me not to desist from the prosecution of my first design. I throw myself therefore upon the candour of the public; hoping that as this sermon was delivered in an extemporaneous manner, and is now drawn up in the way and language in which it was first delivered, that a proper allowance will be made for some expressions, which, perhaps, otherwise would appear improper.

LAWRENCE KANE.

BATH, January 16, 1793.

See six leaves forward

TO THE PUBLIC.

THIS Sermon was preached at the Methodist Chapel in Slough, on the 10th of March, and at the Town-Hall of Reading, by request of the Mayor and others, on Sunday, April 10th, 1791. I was afterwards requested to print it. Accordingly, I wrote it out as near as I could, word for word as I preached it, leaving that a more extensive view either of the subject contained in the text, or of the several who character and life I meant to illustrate by it, would be left to the reader. Which both they and I thought would be answered by the subject. While I was doing this, I heard of several sermons preached on the same occasion, which I hoped would satisfy my friends, and render my work needless. But on reading these sermons, though they did give credit to the memory of the deceased, yet finding the plan to very different from mine, and containing so very few of the points which I have offered, they requested me not to differ from the predication of my last design. I show myself therefore upon the occasion of the publication, hoping that as this sermon was delivered in an extempore manner, and is now drawn up in the way and language in which it was first delivered, that a proper allowance will be made for some expressions, which, perhaps, otherwise would appear improper.

LAWRENCE KANE.

BATH, January 16, 1792.

see 6 leaves backward

THE
HAPPINESS OF THE GOOD
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FUTURE STATE.

MATTHEW XXV. 21.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

THE words which I have now read unto you, are instructive and important to a very high degree, and therefore merit our most serious and careful attention. I have made choice of them with a view of drawing the character of that very *good and faithful servant* of the Lord, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley; whom God in his unsearchable providence has thought proper lately to remove from you, and from his church militant here on earth, to the happiness and glory of the church triumphant in heaven.

B

But

But before I do this, it will be proper to stay a little on the text itself, and briefly to consider some of those joys that await the good and faithful servants of the Lord in a future and an eternal world.

First then, "By the *good and faithful servant* " in the text, is meant one, that has improved the " talents, which were intrusted with him, to the " advancement of religion, and the good of man- " kind. And by being *ruler over many things, and* " *entering into the joy of his Lord*, is shadowed " out the future happiness of those, who have " discharged their duty faithfully," or that have made the business of virtue and religion their leading concern in the world.

Expositors at least, are in general agreed, that this is the true scope and design of our Saviour in this place; but of the precise nature and extent of future happiness and glory, they have not, nor indeed was it possible for them to have told us. For " as it is written, eye " hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it " entered into the heart of man to conceive, " what God hath prepared for them that faith- " fully love and serve him." (a)

Much however may be inferred from the words

(a) 1 Cor. ii. 9.

words of scripture on this head ; as also, from the nature and extent of that happiness with which, as men and Christians, we are already possessed in the present world.

The prophet *Daniel*, speaking of the resurrection of the dead, and the glory that is to follow, says, that they who are zealous for the truth and defend the cause of religion, “ shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, “ and they that turn many to righteousness, “ as the stars for ever and ever.” (b) Our blessed Saviour himself, who well knew what was prepared for the righteous in another world, says, that “ blessed is that servant whom “ his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. “ Of a truth I say unto you,” continues he, “ that he will make him ruler over all that he “ hath.” (c) St. *Peter* also, speaking in the same strain, and having occasion to testify the same things, assures us, that when Christ “ the chief “ shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a “ crown of glory that shall not fade away.” (d) And St. *John* in the *Revelations* expressly asserts, that he heard a voice from heaven, saying unto him, Write, “ Blessed are the dead who die in “ the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the “ spirit,

B 2

(b) Dan. xii. 3. (c) Luke xii. 43. (d) 1 Peter v. 4.

“ spirit, that they may rest from their labours;
 “ and their works do follow them.” (e)

These, and such like, are the declarations of the scriptures on this head, and shew us at least, that the pleasure and happiness of a future world, will be far greater than we can at present either desire or think.

The same thing may be inferred, as we have said, from the nature and extent of that happiness with which, as men and Christians, we are already possessed in the present world. For if in the present world, where the soul, by reason of its connexion with a gross and material body, is clogged and embarrassed in almost ten thousand instances, it be nevertheless capable of true spiritual enjoyments, to hold fellowship with the *Father*, and with the *Son*, and with the *Holy Ghost*, and live and die under supernatural aid and assistance, with what exquisite joy and happiness may we suppose it to be possessed, when once it has thrown off its incumbering dust, and is introduced into the pure and un-sullied regions of heaven! “ Now we know
 “ in part, and we prophesy in part: but when
 “ that which is perfect is come, then that which
 “ is in part shall be done away: For now we
 “ see

“ see through a glass darkly ; but then face to face : yea, we shall even see God as he is for ever.

Next to the happiness which religion affords us in the present world, is that which arises from the advancement of the mind in real and useful knowledge ; and which, notwithstanding the confined state of the soul, and the multiplicity of objects that must now necessarily engage it, is frequently found to rise to such degrees of perception and information, as is really wonderful and surprising. Now my argument here is, that if happiness attends the enlargement of the mind at present, and that our souls are capable of such enlargement while attendants on our bodies with all their cares, pains, and sensations, that infinitely more may very reasonably be expected from them, when once they are released from this servile attendance, and are at leisure to attend to their own operations. We may then, without either interruption or pain, go through the whole creation, and be admitted to such an enlarged view of the states and kingdoms of this lower world, and God's providence and government over them, as to make us cry out, like those in the Revelations who had overcome

the beast, "Great and marvellous are thy works,
 " Lord God Almighty! Just and true are all
 " thy ways, thou king of saints."

But the body itself, notwithstanding the hinderance it is to us now, and the happiness which we receive by being dismissed from it, is, nevertheless, one day or other to make a great addition to the happiness and pleasure of a future world. For as in the present world it makes a natural and constituent part of the man, and that he would be utterly incomplete without it; so also may it be said, that in the other world we can never come to our full strength, or proportion of parts and happiness, till it be raised up, and body and soul are reunited.

Philosophers may cavil at this, and amuse themselves and others with our daily wastes and decays of life, the appearances of the body at death, and a thousand other changes, but that it is to be "ransomed from the power of the
 " grave, redeemed from death, and transformed
 " into the image of our Saviour," the scriptures of both the Old and New Testament give us the most plain and constant assurance.

The prophet *Isaiah*, for instance, exciting to confidence in God, says to the people of his
 nation,

nation, "Thy dead men shall live, together
 "with my dead body shall they arise : awake
 "and sing, ye that dwell in dust : for thy dew
 "is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall
 "cast out the dead." (f) The same thing, with
 the additional circumstance of God's discrimi-
 nation between the righteous and the wicked,
 is asserted by the Prophet *Daniel*, "Many of
 them," says he, "who sleep in the dust of the
 "earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and
 "some to shame and everlasting contempt." (g)

As to the writings of the New Testament,
 they every where abound with declarations of
 this nature. I shall however only instance in
 one or two places. The first is in the 3d chap-
 ter of the *Epistle to the Philippians*, ver. 20, 21,
 where St. *Paul*, telling that people that they
 ought to take their maxims from the saints, and
 follow the example of true believers, saith,
 "For our conversation is in heaven, from
 "whence also we look for the Saviour, the
 "Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile
 "body, that it may be fashioned like unto his
 "glorious body, according to the working
 "whereby he is able even to subdue all things
 "unto himself." The second place is the 15th
 "chapter

(f) *Isaiah* xxvi. 19.(g) *Dan.* xii. 2.

chapter of the 1st *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, where the same Apostle tells us, that “as we have
 “ borne the image of the earthly, we shall also
 “ bear the image of the heavenly. The trumpet
 “ shall sound, and the dead shall be raised in-
 “ corruptible, and we shall be changed. For
 “ this corruptible must put on incorruption, and
 “ this mortal must put on immortality. So
 “ when this corruptible shall have put on in-
 “ corruption, and this mortal shall have put on
 “ immortality, then shall be brought to pass
 “ the saying that is written, Death is swallowed
 “ up in victory. O death, where is thy sting?
 “ O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of
 “ death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.
 “ But thanks be to God, which giveth us the
 “ victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Fear
 “ not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good
 “ pleasure to give you the kingdom. Lift up
 “ your heads, for your redemption draweth
 “ nigh.”

Our bodies may now, brethren, because of their gross and corruptible nature, prove inlets to pain and grief, and many other sore sensations; but when our bodies and souls meet again, and their re-union shall be accomplished, they will make us ample amends for all we have ever suf-

suffered from them. "I shall be satisfied," says the Psalmist, "when I awake up with thy likenefs."

Indeed there is no conceiving of any thing so exquisite or glorious in another world, to which the bodies of the righteous may not be improved. They may, for any thing we can say to the contrary, be raised of so refined and delicate a texture, as to "clothe themselves with light as with a garment, to make the clouds their chariots, and even walk upon the wings of the wind." I say the bodies of the righteous, for as for the wicked, the Psalmist tells us, that "they are laid in the grave like sheep, for death to feed upon them," or "awake," as the prophet *Daniel* expresses it, "to shame and everlasting contempt." (*h*) "But they who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them." (*i*)

The fourth thing in which the happiness of the good consists at present, is the "communion of saints;" for they are "one body and one spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their

(*h*) See Psalm xvii. 15. and Dan. xii. 2.

(*i*) See 1 Thess. ii. 14. and Wisdom of Solomon, iii. 5.

“ their calling : one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all. So that they, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” From hence also we may conclude, that much of the pleasure and enjoyment of another world will consist in our being admitted to the society of “just men made perfect,” and other beings of a superior and exalted nature.

It is there we shall “sit down with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob;” the holy martyrs and confessors of a crucified Saviour; “with an innumerable company of angels, and with the general assembly and church of the first born.”

At the head of this august assembly are seated the Ancient of Days, whom *Daniel* saw in a vision, and “Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, whom to look upon is like a jasper, and a sardine stone,” and at the mention of whose name, gusts of praises and bursting glories fill the heavenly place. So that in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for ever more. (k) “Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through

(k) Psalm xvi.

“ through the gates into the city.—Mount Sion,
 “ the city of the living God, the heavenly
 “ Jerufalem.”

But to conclude this head, we fhall be happy, inconceivably happy, in the contemplation of the divine nature and attributes of God. Hitherto, you know, we have faid nothing on this head; and yet, like the others, it is allowed to have its beginning and foundation in this world, and is the moft ufeul, the moft pleafing, and the moft ennobling exercife that ever the human faculties have or can engage in. May we not well fuppofe then, that the fublime contemplation of the divine nature, will not only be part of our employment in another world, but that it will be fuch an addition or enlargement of our pleafure and happinefs, as we can, at prefent, have very little conception of?

Who that looks upon the heavens, the fun, the moon, and the ftars, together with that immenfely expanded fpace occupied by them, and can be indifferent to the power, wifdom, and goodnefs of him that made them, and maffalled them in fuch order? When we ftretch our imagination ftill further, and confider the pleafure we feel on admitting even the probability of each of thefe fixed ftars being fuch a
 fun

fun as ours, furrounded with planets, inhabited worlds, like this we live in, what must be the delight and transport of our souls, when they can expatiate on the divine nature and attributes in that wide unbounded space beyond the most distant of them, and, perhaps, lose themselves amidst other stars and suns, illuminating an infinity of different worlds !

In a word, “ when the soul shall have survived millions of years amidst these pure and unsullied joys, with what unspeakable pleasure the memory shall look backward over that wild field of bliss which we have already past ; and the imagination with much greater transport, may look forward to that endless ocean of delight yet to come ; still pressing onward, and still find nothing to terminate its views.”

Having thus briefly described the happiness of those in a future state, who have improved their time, and made a right use of the talents which were intrusted with them ; I proceed now to my second general head, which was to draw his character, who, above all others we have known or heard of in these last ages of the world, did this, and is now inheriting the promises.

And

And here, brethren, I am free to acknowledge, that in my whole life I do not remember to have felt so much distrust of my own abilities, upon any occasion, or felt my duty as a preacher a greater burden to me. Not that I have any dislike to the thing in itself, as you may suppose, but from a consciousness of my inability of doing justice to a subject of this nature; much less sufficiently to set forth a worth so singular and extraordinary as that of Mr. Wesley's. Since, however, you desire it, and that there are amongst you persons, who, in his life time, have had but little or no opportunity of knowing this great and good man, I shall, in the best manner I am able, draw a short portraiture of his character, that "though dead, he may yet speak" unto you.

I shall begin with his public life and character as a preacher. In which, I think, it will be allowed that no man in the world was more capable of appearing to advantage, or giving to his hearers a fuller or clearer information, concerning the things that make for our peace.

Being born with a soul above the ordinary size of men, and being early instructed in the soundest principles of religion and all other learning, he soon discovered such a talent for

extensive and accurate observation, as made it manifest to all who knew him, that he must one day or other inevitably become a very great man, in whatsoever line of life his fancy should point out to him; for as yet he discovered no inclination to any thing beyond that of being a man of learning. But his father, Samuel Wesley, being a pious man, and a clergyman of some eminence in the church of England, devoting him from the womb, to God and the service of the priesthood, it pleased God to accept his offering, and, at a proper age, to lead the mind of his son the very way he intended.

In 1725 he was sent to the University of Oxford, where, as a reward for his rapid improvements and superior genius, he was soon elected Fellow of Lincoln College, chosen *Greek Lecturer*, and *Moderator of both the Classes*. But God, intending him (as has since appeared very manifest) to teach something better than human learning, presented such objects to his view, and led him on, even then, to such a course of pious assiduity and utility to his fellow students, as was never heard of in a seminary of learning.

In 1729 he and his brother, Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ-church, engaged Mr. Morgan,

Morgan, commoner of Christ-church, and Mr. Kirkham, of Merton College, to spend their evenings with them, in reading the Greek Testament, which they did—till their profiting appearing to all, two or three of Mr. John Wesley's pupils, as also a pupil of Mr. Charles Wesley's, in the course of the next year, desired to be admitted members of this little society. Thus they continued till the year 1732, when they were joined by Mr. Ingham, of Queen's College, Mr. Broughton, of Exeter, Mr. James Hervey, and in 1735 by Mr. Whitfield.

After reading the scriptures, they spent some time in religious conversation and prayer; and, prescribing to themselves the strictest observance of the ordinances of the church, they not only refrained from all the amusements of life, received the sacrament of the Lord's supper every week, fasted, and observed public and private devotion, but, from a more than common strictness of life, beneficence to the poor, decorum in morals, and the exact method in which they disposed of every hour, they acquired a variety of names, and at last the appellation of *Methodist*; by which Mr. Wesley, and Mr. Whitfield's followers, have been ever since distinguished, and by which, I suppose, they

will now continue to be known, as long as the English language is known in the world.

He continued in this way till, in 1735, Dr. *Burton*, one of the Trustees for *Geòrgia*, seeing that "a great and effectual door was opened unto him" in the sacred ministry, pressed him very much to go over to that province to preach to the *Indians*. After some time he consented, and embarked with General *Oglethorpe*, on the 14th of October. Here he continued for two years and upwards, giving such proof of his zeal and great abilities, for his office as made it manifest to all who heard him, that the Lord God had sent him.

In 1738 he returned to England. On his arrival, he seemed inclined to retire to Oxford, and finish his days at the University. But being, as he himself assures us, insensibly led, without any previous plan or design, to preach first in many of the churches in London, then in Bristol, and other places, he was amused, as it were, from this design, till the Lord had made it more fully manifest, both to him and others, for what end and design he had called him. But happening to be a "time when they would not endure sound doctrine;" and the churches, in general, being occupied by men who were for "healing the hurt of the daughter of God's
" people

" people more slightly," his faithful and plain dealing could be borne with no longer; so that, like our Lord of old, and his disciples, he was thrust out into the highways and hedges, exposed to the capricious humour and fury of the, untaught and savage-like part of the people. Many of the clergy also, and even some of the bishops, unable to suppress the envious sensations which his growing fame and popularity raised in their minds, published many sharp and bitter invectives against him; " but none of these things could move him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus (1). He knew the strength and truth of his cause too well, and had too long considered these awful words of the Lord to his servant, the prophet *Ezekiel*, either to give it up, or to be intimidated by the calumnies of men, or any opposition that could be made against him. " Son of man, " I have made thee a watchman unto the " House of Israel; therefore hear the word at " my mouth, and give them warning from me. " When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt " surely die; and thou give him not warning, nor
 C 3 " speakest

“ speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked
 “ way, to save his life, the same wicked man
 “ shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I
 “ require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the
 “ wicked, and he turn not from his wicked-
 “ ness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in
 “ his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.
 “ Whether, therefore, they would hear, or
 “ whether they would forbear,” he made his re-
 port, and delivered his soul in faithfully warn-
 ing them.

The rest of his days, except a visit, which,
 in 1738, he paid Count Zinzendorff, and other
 protestant brethren in *Germany*, were spent in
 reforming the manners of the people through-
 out *Great Britain and Ireland*: Planting new
 societies, and affirming constantly, with St.
 Paul (*m*), “that they which have believed in God,
 “ should be careful to maintain good works.”
 Till at last we find this great and extraordinary
 man at the head of more than one hundred
 and twenty thousand people, besides hundreds,
 and thousands, which he had sent before him to
Abraham's bosom.

Whoever considers the difficulties that attend
 the reformation of mankind, or indeed the con-
 vincing

vincing men of their errors, will greatly wonder to hear of the eyes of so many being opened ; but it serves to shew us, that if men are but faithful to God, and have a true zeal for his glory, that nothing in the world shall be able to stand before them.

Such a man, both in heart and life, was the Rev. Mr. John Wesley. By him might truly be said, what was only a little more true of one other man in all the world :—“ In journeyings
 “ often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in
 “ perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the
 “ heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the
 “ wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among
 “ false brethren. In weariness and painfulness,
 “ in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in
 “ fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides
 “ those things that are without, that which
 “ cometh upon me daily, the care of all the
 “ churches.” (n)

We have seen him, like St. Paul, giving up his seat, “ at the feet of Gamaliel,” forsaking a state of affluence, and, what was by far more dear to him, the society of philosophers ; braving the danger of long and perilous voyages, of strange and raging climates ; and
 with

(n) 2 Cor. xi. 26, &c.

with the everlasting gospel in his hand, and the spirit of its author in his heart, making his way through burning deserts, the wild waste, and howling wilderness, to inform poor dark and unenlightened *Indians* of their interest in a crucified Redeemer. “ To open their eyes, “ and to turn them from darkness to light, “ and from the power of Satan unto God, that “ they might receive forgiveness of sins, and “ inheritance among them which are sanctified “ by faith that is in Christ Jesus.”(o)

We have seen him at home making himself a spectacle to men and angels, and with the zeal and constancy of a martyr, making his way through the loud laugh of some, and the fury and outrage of others; not to compass fame, wealth, or power; no; but to court the society of the *tin-men* of Cornwall, the *colliers* of Kingswood and Newcastle, or any other description of men whom he found neglected or abandoned to atheism and infidelity. Entering their loathsome cabins, adopting their offensive customs, and “ becoming all things to “ all men, that he might win them to Christ;” while the profane tongue of infidelity blasphemed, by branding these virtues and pious labours

labours with the odious names of *fanaticism*, *enthusiasm*, and *superstition*. "But wisdom is justified of her children."

He rose every morning at four, or half after, preached three or four times every day, wrote much for the use of the public, rode between five and six thousand miles a year, besides writing almost as many letters, having either societies or correspondents in most parts of Europe and America.

"Who was weak, and he not weak? Who was offended, and he burn not? To the weak became he as weak, that he might gain the weak: he was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some: He did not as many who corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, in all things approving himself as the minister of God. And this he did by pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as a deceiver, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold he lived; as chastened, and not killed;

“ killed ; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ; as
 “ poor, yet making many rich : as having no-
 “ thing, and yet possessing all things.” (*p*)

I come now to the matter and manner of his preaching ; points in which it were devoutly to be wished preachers in general were a little attentive. First, he never took a text, that did not at once shew his present purpose of doing good and giving information ; and “ speaking the things which became sound doctrine,” he ever succeeded accordingly.

He taught in every sermon, more or less, what was most essential, both in faith and practice. On the points of faith, he did not content himself with barely saying or fixing the general truths of religion, as the manner of some is, but beautifully descended down to the most particular doctrines of the gospel. But what above all he most delighted in, were the sublime doctrines of justification and sanctification. Of both which he talked with such fullness, clearness, evidence, conviction, and force, as if there were no other amongst men to whom it was given fully to know and explain them.

In what a masterly manner did he also define these doctrines, and apply them ! He shewed that

that however excellent it was to grow in knowledge, and have the truths of religion well fixed and grounded in theory, that yet the bare knowledge of any or all of them, was by no means able to save us. That men must be truly good as well as wise, and that without holiness of heart as well as life, it was not possible to be saved. He therefore took all possible pains to persuade men to “add to their faith, “virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to “knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, “patience; and to patience, godliness; and “to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity—For that he that “lacketh these things, is blind, and cannot see “far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged “from his old sins.” (q)

In fine, “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there was any virtue, if there was any praise, he thought on those things,” and enforced them in his sermons.

2. As to his manner, it was easy, natural, and graceful; speaking as well with his countenance,

nance, his eyes, and hands*, as with the organs of speech. He expressed in a few plain words the proposition which he was going to illustrate, till by sentences the most harmonious and well constructed, the hearers were conducted to a conclusion the most beautiful and concise, that the English, or perhaps any other language in the world, could admit of. For he had the talent of saying more in fifteen or twenty minutes, than any other man we have ever known could do in an hour.

His style also, though not florid, nor the effect of any studied labour, was clear, pure, correct, and elegant ; and being ever suggested by piety, good sense, and the nature of the subject he treated, it was always the best that could be conceived on every occasion. In a word, he “ studied to shew himself approved unto God ; a workman that needed not to be ashamed ; rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Thus much I could not help saying on his character as a preacher, who, from the clearness of his apprehension, fullness of information,

* On the subject of Action and Utterance, I believe Mr. Wesley will be found to have said more in a little penny pamphlet, which is to be seen among his other works, than is to be found in Mr. Rollin's two octavo volumes, or Dr. Blair's three volumes on the Belles Lettres.

and

and strength and perspicuity of argument, rose to truths of the most divine and elevated nature, obtained the name of the greatest and most useful preacher, that Europe, at least, ever produced.

I come now, in the second place, to give some account of him as a writer.

And here, brethren, there are so many views to be taken, that I know not where to begin: For whether I consider the quantity or the quality of his writings, it will be a very hard matter to think of any one, whether ancient or modern, with whom we may compare him.

As to the quantity of his writings, it is impossible to speak or give a sufficient account upon an occasion of this kind. Let it suffice then, at present, to say, that Divinity, both devotional and controversial,—History, both ancient and modern,—Philosophy, both in theory and practice,—Medicine, Politics, and Poetry, &c. &c. were at different times the subjects of his pen. And as to the quality of his writings, it will, I believe, be allowed, that talents short of his own will find it a task too hard fully to describe them. He possessed a certain beauty, elegance, and propriety of sentiment, rarely to be found in so extensive a writer. His style was clear, strong, and nervous. He had not only the

clearness and discernment of *Locke*, the ease and unaffectedness of *Swift* or *Bolingbroke*, but the power of a *Newton*, to strike out into new and unbeaten tracks of thought. And he may be said to have extended the limits of religious knowledge, as far beyond the place where he found it, as either *Locke* or *Newton* have Philosophy, or any one branch of it. In short, he seems to have been born to change the course of the world, for the path he has struck out is become almost boundless, having already made its way through one half of the known world.

His sermons, of which he had a great many, are pure, clear, weighty, and solid. They are drawn up without the least affectation of learning, and yet they seem full of all the graces and beauties of it. They draw us off from the weak and inadequate attempts of most other sermon writers; disarm our prejudice and evil habits, and dispose insensibly to virtue, the love of God, and one another.

His dexterity in debate, as Mr. Badcock, one of the Monthly Reviewers, observed of him, has been so long known, that it is almost become proverbial. Matured by time, in "separating truth from falsehood, how artfully soever they were twisted together," he rid the world of a great deal of pedantry and jargon;

gon; leaving his adversary vanquished in the field, or shamefully retreating after one or two encounters. An attempt had been made by Dr. *Taylor* of *Norwich*, between thirty and forty years ago, to destroy the doctrine of original sin; a doctrine which to deny, no one ever had the consent of his own mind, much less that of scripture, fact, or experience. The Doctor's book, however, was for some time deemed unanswerable; so that *his goods*, like the strong man armed in the gospel, were *at peace*: But no sooner had this great man of God, a stronger than he, arose, than he stripped him of his armour in which he trusted, proved the total downfall of his whole system, and made an open shew of both him and it.

And as "there must be also heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest," so it seemed good in the divine wisdom, that his abilities in this way should be made more fully manifest, and prove a scourge to many others, who, like Dr. Taylor, had been *subverted* from the faith, and that were subverting and seducing their fellow christians. But as these, in general, have mistaken loose and bitter invectives for proof, mere hypothesis for truth, and supported the most extravagant and dangerous opinions, I refrain to name them.

“ Arguments under his happy direction and
 “ management, were arrows, of which his quiver
 “ was ever full,” so that he was always able to
 contend with his adversary in the gate, and bring
 the deceitful wisdom of this world, that cometh
 to nought, to submit and lie down, as it were,
 at the foot of the cross of Jesus.

With regard to his life and conversation, he
 was no less singular and extraordinary, than in
 his merit as a preacher and a writer.

Ennobled with every grace and virtue which
 adorns the human nature, he was rich in good
 works, and glad to communicate: “ In the
 “ morning he sowed his seed, and in the even-
 “ ing withheld not his hand;” though he never
 let his “ left hand know what his right hand
 “ did.” He reprobated, in the severest terms,
 the detestable notion, “ that we are not to do
 “ good, except we be moved to it ;” misery and
 want, wherever we meet with them, being, in
 his opinion, all that is necessary to entitle an
 object to relief, and endear him to us. For
 such as these he had such strong and tender
 feelings, in all their cares and sorrows of life,
 and engaged so often, both with his head and
 his heart, to relieve them, that I may venture
 to say he was one of the most merciful men
 that this or any other country ever produced.

The

The amazing liberality and extent of his mind also in conversation, made him one of the most pleasing and profitable companions in the world. The progress of his mind through the regions of science, and a long and laborious life, made him master of such vast stores of information and knowledge, that he was never at a loss upon any occasion or subject; but seemed, from the clearness and certainty of all he delivered, as if he had been present through all time, and had seen the transactions of every country in the world.

As a member of a free and well governed state, he was ever grateful; and of his regard for his country and invincible loyalty to his prince, his writings at home, and the loyalty and sufferings of his people in *America*, during that unhappy war, are sufficient instances. In almost every prayer of his life, he had something to crave for the Church and the King, and was even heard, a few minutes before his death, to breathe out these words, "O Lord, bless the Church and King: grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever!"

In a word, in him the Christian, the Gentleman, and the Scholar were most happily united; and

and his humanity, humility, affability, and condescension were such, as will endear his memory to the latest posterity.

Of his last sickness and death, I have many things to say unto you; but I fear that neither my strength nor your patience would hold us out to the end of them. I cannot however, having brought you thus far, deny myself the pleasure of taking you, as it were, for a few minutes, into the chamber of this great and good man; where, though not adorned with tapestry, embroidered hangings, rich cabinets, or polished marbles, you will see a great soul, adorned with the richest graces and fruits of the sacred spirit; happy in God, happy in Christ; happy in his people, in his work and labour; and with his latest breath bearing the most unshaken testimony to the evangelical truths which he had so long maintained.

Approach a little nearer, and you will hear him speak for himself. On Tuesday the 1st, having said that there "was no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus," he broke out in these beautiful and sublime lines:

All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restor'd,
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear our omnipotent Lord!

Who

Who meanly in Bethlehem born,
 Didst stoop to redeem a lost race;
 Once more to thy people return,
 And reign in thy kingdom of grace.
 When thou in the flesh didst appear,
 All nature acknowledg'd thy birth;
 Arose the acceptable year;
 And heaven was open'd on earth:
 Receiving its Lord from above,
 The world was united to bleſs
 The giver of concord and love,
 The prince and the author of peace.

His voice and strength now failing him, he
 called for a pen and ink; but in this also his
 weakness prevented him. A friend then pre-
 sent propoſing to write for him, asked him what
 he had to ſay. "Nothing," returned he, "but
 "that God is with us." On the foundation of
 this conviction, he breaks out again in the
 following lines:

I'll praife my Maker while I've breath,
 And when my voice is loſt in death,
 Praiſe ſhall employ my nobler powers:
 My days of praife ſhall ne'er be paſt,
 While life and thought, and being laſt,
 Or immortality endures.

Happy the man whoſe hopes rely
 On Iſrael's God; he made the ſky,
 And earth, and ſeas, with all their train;
 His truth for ever ſtands ſecure,
 He ſaves the oppreſs'd, he feeds the poor,
 And none ſhall find his promiſe vain.

In proportion as the natural sun withdrew, the sun of righteousness drew nigh, with the superior rays of the divine glory. "He causeth his servants," says he, "to lie down in peace." Then pausing a little, he says, "The clouds drop fatness!"—"The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

Thus lived, and thus died, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley; a man the most learned, virtuous, useful, and truly christian, that ever adorned either Church or State.

In view of such a man, such excellency, such goodness, such virtue, and such a life, I humble myself, and with awe and reverence adore the goodness of God in *Christ Jesus*, who having enlarged his great and well taught soul from the confines of dull mortality, crowned all the labours of his aged and worn-out servant with "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!—" "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

FINIS.